MURDERS.

TRUE EXAMPLES OF THE INTERPOSITION OF PROVIDENCE, IN THE DISCOVERY AND PUNISHMENT OF MURDER.

Entered according to Order, 1798.

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OF THE

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MURDER.

By that famous Magistrate Mr. Justice Fielding

A Man was taken up on suspicion of Murder, but when brought to the Bar, the evidence appeared not strong enough to convict him. He pretended to be quite easy about the matter, and behaved with great boldness, because he knew there was no witness to the fact for he had really committed the Murder and had taken every caution to prevent a discovery; having made of all that care and prudence which are always much sharpened by a sense of guilt, though they have hardly ever been known to answer the end: some one circumstance being generally overlooked, by the permission of Divine Providence, in order to lead to a sure, though perhaps distant discovery. Sooner or later all sin comes to light.

When he came upon his trial, the Judge observed in the Man's countenance an uneasiness, terror, and confusion, which all

his pretended boldneſs, and proteſtations of innocence could not hide this much increaſed his ſuſpicion and he therefore kept his eye ſteadily fixed on his face during the whole time. As ſoon as the laſt witneſs was diſmiſſed the Man aſked with pretended coolneſs, if they had any more evidence to produce againſt him. The Judge fixed his eyes ſternly upon his face, and in a very ſolemn manner aſked him this queſtion "Man, do you not yourſelf know that one *could* appear againſt you whoſe evidence would put the matter out of all doubt?" At this the Man ſtarted looked extremely terrified, and eagerly cried out—"My Lord, he is not a legal witneſs, no Man can ſpeak in his own cauſe, nor was the wound I gave him half ſo large, as what he ſhews againſt me".

The judge who had a very deep knowledge of human nature preſently perceived by the Man's ſtarting and the wildneſs and terror of his look that he was the real Murderer and that in the diſtraction of a guilty conſcience his imagination had raiſed up to him that the Ghoſt of the Murdered Man. The Judge therefore acting upon ſuch a reaſonable ſuppoſition, talked to the priſoner accordingly, by his further examination he ſoon brought him to confeſs that he had been guilty of the Murder for which he was tried; though as was ſaid above, he had made ſure of being ac-

quitted, because he knew no human witness could be brought to appear against him. But the justice of God made his own conscience his accuser. After this full confession of the fact, he was condemned, and hanged in chains at the very place where he declared the Murder had been committed.

At his death he confessed that his guilty conscience was so haunted with the crime, that upon his trial he verily believed the Ghost of the Murdered Man had stood before him with a wound, twice as large as that which he had given him.

ACCOUNT OF ANOTHER MURDER.

(RECORDED BY THE SAME AUTHOR.)

A Gentleman in good circumstances was so desperately wicked as to murder his Friend, a Man in business near Bow-Church in Cheapside; and with such aggravated circumstances of malice, revenge and cruelty, as made it impossible for him to expect any mercy, if his crime should ever be found out. He therefore made his escape into France, where he lived for some years, and began to fancy that he was quite safe; but God's

thoughts are not as our thoughts, and the voice of blood will be heard by Almighty vengeance sooner or later But from the horrors of his guilty conscience which almost every night presented before his Eyes, whether sleeping or waking his murdered Friend he felt tenfold the punishment which by flight he had vainly hoped to escape.

After twenty years residence, or rather wandering abroad, through most parts of Europe, (for his mind was not quiet enough to let him live long in the same place) he resolved to return back into England.—He changed his name, and as time and change of climate had altered his person he doubted not but he might in some retired part of the Country wear out the remainder of his days, and perhaps recover that peace of mind which he had there left behind him.

But public justice though slow at last overtook him for the very evening that he landed in a Wherry at Queenhithe stairs, as he was walking up Cheapside in order to get into a Coach, just in the dusk, and by the very door of his Murdered friend he heard a voice cry "stop him, stop him there he is".—On this he ran as fast as he was able, and soon found himself followed by a great Mob. He was soon overtaken and seized; on which he cried out with extreme terror

"I confess the fact: I am the Man that did it".

The Mob hereupon said, as he had confessed the crime they would immediately proceed to execution, and after they had made him refund the stolen goods, they would give him the discipline of pumping, dragging him through the kennel and the like. On this he said he had stolen nothing, for though he had murdered Mr. L. yet he had no intention of robbing his house.

By this unexpected answer the Mob found themselves mistaken; for they were pursuing a pick pocket, and seeing this Man run hard, they concluded him to be the pick pocket: and now they were for letting him go as a person distracted that knew not what he said. One man however who had long lived in that neighbourhood, and heard of the Murder of Mr. L. so long ago, desired the stranger Gentleman might be examined before a Magistrate. He was accordingly carried before the Lord Mayor, who took his confession of the fact for which he was soon after hanged. He declared at the Gallows that disgraceful as his punishment was, yet the day of his execution was the happiest he had known since he committed that horrid, treacherous, and inhuman act, the murder of a friend who loved him, and to whom he had the highest obligations.

A Prayer to God, that our National Crimes, may not bring down National Punishments.

WHILE Juſtice waves her vengeful hand
Tremendous o'er a guilty land,
Almighty God thy awful power,
With fear and trembling we adore.

Where ſhall we fly, but to thy feet?
Our only refuge is thy ſeat,
Thy ſeat, where potent mercy pleads,
And hurls thy thunder from our heads.

While peace and plenty bleſs'd our days,
Where was the tribute of thy praiſe?
Ungrateful race! how have we ſpent
The bleſſings which thy goodneſs ſent.

But when diſtreſs and waſting war,
With threat'ning frown thy wrath appear;
Still war and want are but thy ſlaves,
Nor can deſtroy when mercy ſaves.

Look down, O Lord, with pitying eye;
Tho' loud our crimes for vengeance cry;
Let mercy's louder voice prevail,
Nor thy long-ſuffering patience fail.

Encourag'd by thy ſacred word,
May we not p'ead the bleſt record,
That when a humbled nation mourns,
Thy raiſing wrath to pity turns?

O ler thy ſov'reign grace impart,
Contrition to each rocky heart,
And bid ſincere repentance flow,
A general undiſſembled woe!

Fair ſmiling peace again reſtore,
With plenty bleſs th induſtrious poor;
And may a happy thankful land,
Obedient own thy guardian hand.

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FINIS.